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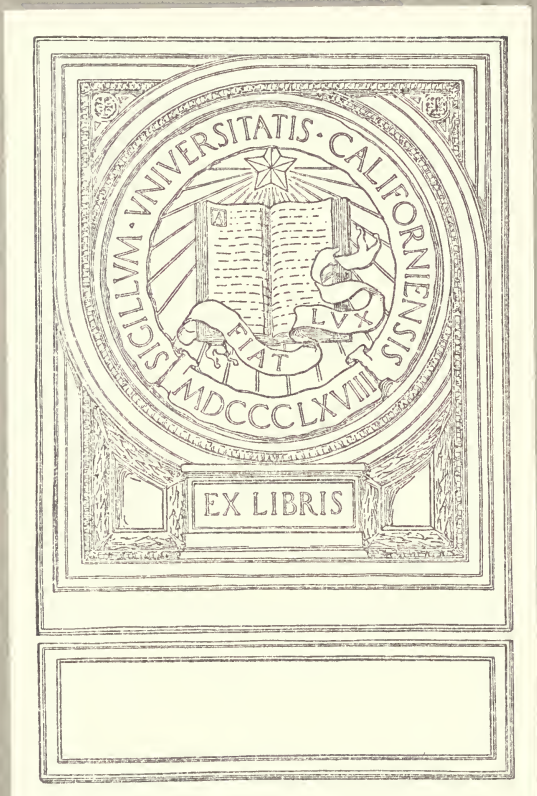
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Richard Frothingham

THE BATTLE-FIELD

OF

BUNKER HILL:

WITH

A RELATION OF THE ACTION

BY

WILLIAM PRESCOTT,

AND

Illustrative Documents.

A PAPER COMMUNICATED TO THE MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL SOCIETY JUNE 10, 1875, WITH ADDITIONS.

BY

RICHARD FROTHINGHAM.

BOSTON:
PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR.
1876.

VIEW OF CHARLESTOWN IN 1743.

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Cambridge:
Press of John Wilson & Son.

THE

BATTLE-FIELD OF BUNKER HILL.

The stated Monthly Meeting of the Massachusetts Historical Society was held at the residence of Richard Frothingham, No. 9 Monument Square, on the 10th of June, 1875. The first Vice-President, Hon. Charles Francis Adams, was in the chair.

The customary business having been transacted, the presiding officer made remarks appropriate to the occasion. He referred to the associations connected with the spot on which the Society had assembled, and called on Mr. Frothingham, who spoke substantially as follows: * —

MR. FROTHINGHAM'S REMARKS.

I am glad to welcome this large attendance of the members on this famous battle-ground. It evinces the wide interest in the approaching great centenary. I do not mean to weary you with a recital of the old story of the Bunker Hill Battle, but purpose to confine my remarks to a few of the more important maps and illustrations displayed on the frame before you; and to have these remarks bear upon the main points of the battle.

The "View of Charlestown in 1743" is a reproduction of an old picture. It represents only a portion of the large area of territory belonging to the town in 1775, which em-

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* The "View of Charlestown" is here published for the first time.

M176410

braced the whole of the present city of Somerville. It had between four and five hundred buildings, and between two and three thousand inhabitants. The picture represents the southern portion of the peninsula bordering on Charles River. On the opposite, or the north-eastern, side is the Mystic River. The two rivers flow near each other at the Neck; indeed, within half a century, in high tides, the waters met and made the peninsula an island. On the extreme right is seen a battery with a flag and port-holes. This was built in 1634; was kept ready for use, and was regularly inspected by the government of the colony. Nine months previous to the battle, or in September, 1774, its guns and ammunition were quietly removed in the night to a place of security, by the young men of Charlestown. Next to it is represented a ship-yard; this place and the battery are named, in the accounts of the battle, as the places where the re-enforcements landed. They were near the entrance to the Navy Yard. The line of wharves indicates the commerce that had long been a feature of the town. The buildings were located on the southern side of the heights. The three spires denote the school-house, the church, and the court-house.

A view of the heights and hills is more fully represented on a sketch drawn in 1775. It is entitled, "A View of Charlestown and the Back Ground, as far as the Narrow Pass. Taken from the Beacon Hill." On the right of the picture is Moulton Hill, which was near where Chelsea Bridge commences. It was thirty-five feet high. The name is from Robert Moulton, a famous ship-builder, who was here in 1631. He was a member of the first board of selectmen, one of the first representative delegation, and was, in every respect, a valuable citizen. Near this hill, or on the point now a portion of the Navy Yard, the British army landed. On the left is Bunker Hill. This name is from an early citizen, George Bunker, a man of wealth and character. He was here in 1634, and was assigned land extending from Main Street on the south, over the hill back of it to the north, to Mystic River. His proportion in allotments of land for several years is among the largest. His descendants were numerous, and one of his sons was a clergyman. In answer to inquiries, I informed Mr. Froude when he was here, of these facts, and that the name Bunker Hill was from George Bunker, and is found on Charlestown records and in deeds of land all through the colonial era. I was surprised to see Mr. Froude's statement that he could not learn, when he was in America, the origin of the name of Bunker Hill. Bunker Hill

A VIEW OF CHARLES TOWN, AND THE BACK GROUND, AS FAR AS THE NARROW PASS.

Taken from the Beacon Hill.

was one hundred and ten feet high. On its northern acclivity, the British built a fortress of remarkable strength. Here the fighting ended on the evening of the 19th of April, and here the battle closed on the afternoon of the 17th of June.

The high land rising from the settled part of the town was not known, prior to the day of the battle, by a particular name. It was, like Bunker Hill and Moulton's Hill, covered with orchards and pasture grounds. On the portion near the monument were Russell's Pasture, Green's Pasture, and Breed's Pasture. I have not met the term "Breed's Hill" before the date of 1775, either in the Charlestown records, the Middlesex county records, or in private letters; but saw it for the first time in a letter giving an account of the battle. It soon came into use. The name is from a respectable citizen who was a large land-owner here. I am aware that Colonel Prescott, in his letter of Aug. 25, 1775, says that he "received orders to March to Breed's Hill"; but this must have been an inadvertence. He was certainly ordered to Bunker Hill. The eastern side sloped to low land, on which were clay pits and marsh, which has been filled up. Beyond this, or along the margin of the Mystic, the land became higher, and so continued from Moulton's Point to the base of Bunker Hill. It is the surface of to-day.

Thirty years ago I searched the town archives, the State archives, and several public libraries for a map of Charlestown of the date of 1775, or before that year, but unsuccessfully. Nor has there yet been found, of that date, more than plans of parts of the town. At that time, I succeeded in getting from England a map published on a sheet, under the following title: "A Plan of the Action at Bunker's Hill, on the 17th of June, 1775, between His Majesty's Troops, under the Command of Major General Howe, and the Rebel Forces; by Lieutenant Page of the Engineers, who acted as Aide-de-Camp to General Howe in that action. N. B. The Ground Plan is from an Actual Survey by Captain Montresor."

Captain Montresor was subsequently (Sparks's Washington, IV., 105) an aide-de-camp of General Howe.

This map was published in 1777. The author, Lieutenant Page, was an engineer of the royal navy. On account of the wounds he then received, he had leave of absence, and was in England in January, 1776. "This gentleman," says the London "Chronicle," Jan. 11, 1776, "is the only one now living of those who acted as aides-de-camp to General Howe, so great was the slaughter of officers that day. He particularly

distinguished himself in the storming of the redoubt, for which he received General Howe's thanks." He was on the field for months after the action, and doubtless often visited the redoubt which he helped to storm. He would be likely to master the details of the battle. Thus his profession as an engineer, and his services as a soldier, qualified him in a peculiar manner for the work of preparing a plan of the battle. He also, from his own observations and the plans of others, published, in 1777, a Plan of Boston, showing the British works. The first American engravings of this Plan of Boston and of the battle were made on copper plate for the "Siege of Boston," published in 1849.

In 1794, C. Stedman, of London, published a "History of the American War." He also served under General Howe. This work has elaborate plans of the more important battles of the revolutionary war. One of them is entitled, "A Plan of the Action at Bunker's Hill, on the 17th of June, 1775. Between His Majesty's troops, under the command of Major General Howe, and the American Forces: engraved for Stedman's History of the War. Published by the Author, April 12th, 1793." This is the whole title. It does not say that the ground-plan was from an actual survey, or that the plan was drawn by an engineer. On comparing, however, the engraving of which I had a copy, of 1777, with that of 1793, I found that the plate of the former had only been altered in the title, but that the rest of it had been retained and used for the history. This is the copy that was best known in America. It is what is termed the "Stedman Map," or the "Stedman Plan." It is here before you. No other map of an authentic or elaborate character, and only those displayed on this frame, appeared for nearly a quarter of a century. Then "The Gleaner," a newspaper published in Wilkesbarre, by Charles Miner, had an article relative to a plan of the battle of Bunker Hill, "taken by a British officer at the time, who was in the engagement." It was a manuscript found in an old drawer, and was a portion of the captured baggage of an officer of the British army. The article says: "This probably is the only accurate plan of that memorable battle in existence. It ought certainly to be engraved."

Following this suggestion, the "Analectic Magazine," for February, 1818, printed a *fac-simile* of this plan. The editor says: "It has been submitted to many respectable inhabitants of Boston, Charlestown, and the vicinity, some engaged in the action of that memorable day, others spectators of it;

all of whom concur in pronouncing it to be correct, with trivial exceptions. Its general accuracy has been approved by Governor Brooks, General Dearborn, Dr. Dexter, the Hon. Mr. Winthrop, and Mr. Prescott, son of the Colonel Prescott who first marked out the entrenchments in the night of the 16th of June, which he afterwards contributed so ably to defend. Dr. Bartlett, of Charlestown, on examining the plan, pointed out the station of a man-of-war — the 'Somerset,' 74 — to be directly between Boston and Charlestown, whence she could batter the American Redoubt." The title is as follows: "Sketch of the Action on the Heights of Charlestown, June 17, 1775, between His Majesty's Troops, under the command of Major-General Howe, and a large body of American Rebels. Copied by J. A. Chapman from an original sketch taken by Henry De Berniere, of the 14th Regiment of Infantry, now in the hands of J. Cist, Esq. Engraved by Kneass, Young, & Co., for the 'Analectic Magazine.' Published by M. Thomas, Philad[a]." A copy of this is on the frame before you.

The editor of the "Port Folio" also procured an engraving of it, by Mr. Fairman. A proof-sheet was submitted to General Henry Dearborn, who served as a captain in the battle. He indicated what he regarded as a few errors, which he corrected in red, "without removing what appeared to him amiss, as it was deemed unnecessary to disturb the original." This plan appeared in this shape, — that is, the red on the map, — in the "Port Folio" for March, 1818, as "drawn by Henry de Berniere, Tenth Royal Infantry." A copy of this is on the frame. In the points of the redoubt and breastwork, of the rail fence on the declivity of Bunker Hill, of the landing of the main body of the British army and of the re-enforcements, and of the general movements of the action, it agrees, substantially, with the plan of Page. In these regards, the plans may be looked upon as invaluable testimony to each other's accuracy. Both have "Bunker Hill." Berniere has "Bunker" on both the hills, but does not give "Breed's Hill." Page gives both names, but places them wrong, — that is, he puts "Bunker's Hill" where "Breed's Hill" ought to be. Berniere has "School-House Hill," which, on the crude map in "Murray's War in America," 1782, before you, is called "School Hill."

This plan of Berniere's has been reproduced in this country several times since 1818, as may be seen in the copies before you. The testimonies to its accuracy by, among others, citizens of Charlestown, must have been confined to the general

movements of the battle. The ground-plan was not from an actual survey, and though, in general, it bears a certain resemblance to the place, yet in its detail it is quite incorrect and unworthy of being followed as a guide. In spite of this, however, it appears to have been the only one used at the period of the building of the present monument.

Down to this time, little if any attention appears to have been given to the plan of Page. The vital fact stated in its title, that the ground-plan was from an actual survey, by Montresor, does not seem to have elicited a single remark. I know of no attempt to test its accuracy. It happened that, in 1848, Messrs. Felton and Parker, accomplished engineers, were employed by the city to survey and make a plan of Charlestown. The printed copy was drawn on the same scale as that of Page. In 1849, I had an engineer draw, on the plan of Felton and Parker, the plan of Page. This is before you. The shore-lines of the entire peninsula, and the principal streets, will be seen to coincide to such a degree as to inspire singular confidence in the survey of Montresor. Indeed, the correspondence is remarkable. Is it to be supposed that Lieutenant Page would be less careful in delineating the location of the redoubt, or of the breastwork, or of the rail fence, than Montresor had been in measuring the ground? Was not his reputation at stake? Is it possible that he could have been so derelict to his own honor as to have delineated, for the redoubt which he aided to storm, a fortification thrown up by the British?

Because these questions must be answered in the negative, I am confident there is no difficulty in locating exactly the lines of the redoubt, the breastwork, and the rail fence. It is only necessary to compare contemporary accounts with the accurate survey of Montresor, and the plan of Page, and mark out the result on the ground.

The authorities agree substantially in their description of the redoubt, marked out on the night of the 16th of June, by Colonel Richard Gridley. The committee of safety, in a narrative drawn up by Rev. Peter Thacher, from information communicated by Colonel Prescott and others in the battle, term it "a small redoubt about eight rods square." Rev. John Martin was in the battle, and he states that it was "ten rods long and eight rods wide." The account in "Rivington's Gazette," a Tory paper, says (Aug. 3, 1775) "that it was seven or eight rods square." The front, or south side, faced the settled portion of the town, and had projecting angles; the north side had a sally-port,

protected by a blind. This is laid down by Page and Berniere.

This work was unfinished when the beautiful morning of the 17th of June dawned. The British ship "Preston" was moored in Charles River, and her log-book says of the weather at 4 A.M., "Light airs and calm." It has the same record at 12 M. It says also: "At four, we observed the rebels were entrenching upon a hill which commanded Boston." Then a cannonade began which, with intervals, continued during the forenoon. Colonel Prescott says: "I found it necessary to draw a line about twenty rods in length from the fort northerly." He here threw up earth-works. The committee of safety describe this line as "a small breast-work extending from the north side of the redoubt to the bottom of the hill"; or to the low, sloughy land. This was about 300 feet. The direction of this line of defence is laid down by Page and by Berniere. Page, being the most accurate, is relied on as to the site.

There are references to a slight defence along a cartway on the south side, or the right of the redoubt; and, on Berniere's plan, to a barn, the fire from which was silenced by a portion of the 47th regiment.

Such were the American entrenchments at about one o'clock. Then the king's troops landed in splendid order at Moulton's Point, behind Moulton's Hill, and there formed in three columns. Colonel Prescott, seeing these movements "on the north-easterly point from the fort," says, Aug. 25, 1775: "I ordered the train, with two field-pieces, to go and oppose them, and the Connecticut forces to support them." He does not say that he ordered a line of defence to be commenced at the base of Bunker Hill. Captain John Chester, July 22, 1775, however, says: "They," the British, "were very near Mystic River, and, by their movements, had determined to outflank our men, and surround them and the fort. But our officers in command, soon perceiving their intention, ordered a large party of men (chiefly Connecticut) to leave the fort, and march down and oppose the enemy's right wing. This they did; and had time to form somewhat regularly behind a fence, half of stone and two rayles of wood. Here Nature had formed something of a breastwork, or else there had been a ditch many years agone. They grounded arms, and went to a neighboring parallel fence, and brought rayles and made a slight fortification against musket ball." The express, dated June 18, 1775, printed in the "New York Gazette," of June 26, has this relation: "The provincial

centries discovered the regulars marching upon their left wing. Upon notice of this given to the centry of the Connecticut forces posted on that wing, Captain Knowlton, of Ashford, with 400 of the said forces, immediately repaired to and pulled up a post and rail fence, and, carrying the post and rails to another fence, put them together for a breastwork." While Captain Knowlton was doing this, between two and three o'clock, Colonels Stark and Reed reached the field. Stark posted his forces on the left of Knowlton, extending this line of defence to and on the beach, throwing up there a wall of stones. Reed posted his men between Knowlton and Stark. Of this "Hampshire force," Colonel Prescott says that it "lined a fence at the distance of three-score rods back of the fort, partly to the north." According to the plan of Page, this line would run through the present burial-ground and the piece of land on which the Prescott school-house stands. As to the location of this line, in general terms, the plan of Berniere and the language of Prescott agree with the line of Page. The most reliable authorities also agree in ascribing the credit of beginning this line to Captain Knowlton, who was a born soldier. It was, according to Page, about nine hundred feet in length.

Knowlton, Stark, and Reed were, at the least, an hour in making this rail and hay protection. General Howe and his command were behind Moulton Hill; and, with his glass, he might have seen the beginning and the progress of this defence. He might have driven off the troops who were doing this. He might have applied for a gunboat or for a frigate to move up the Mystic, and their guns could have enfiladed this line. But General Howe did nothing to interrupt this work. No gunboat moved up Mystic River until after the battle was over.

Thus the Americans were left undisturbed in this line of defence, against which the flower of the British army were led. This consisted of the battalion of Grenadiers and the battalion of Light Infantry. It was a custom to select from each regiment the tallest and finest-looking men to form a company. They were called Grenadiers. They occupied the right of the battalion when in line, and led in attack. They were distinguished by a high cap, and other peculiarities in dress. In this way, the Light Infantry companies also were composed. On the 2d of June, "the Grenadiers and Light Infantry of the different corps" were ordered "to encamp immediately on the Common"; and, on the 15th, the regiments who had not completed their Grenadiers and Light

Infantry companies with officers were ordered to do it immediately. Hence several of the regiments — among them the 23d, or Welsh Fusileers — had only their Grenadiers, or Light Infantry Companies, in the battle.

At about three o'clock, the British columns moved forward to attack the entrenchments, — the Grenadiers and Light Infantry, under General Howe, along the high ground by the Mystic towards the rail fence; and another division, under General Pigot, on the south-eastern side, up the hill towards the redoubt and breastwork. "The provincials," Jefferson, then in Congress, wrote, July 5, 1775, "sustained two attacks in their trenches, and twice repulsed the ministerial forces with immense slaughter. The third attack . . . the provincials gave ground." The evidence as to the simultaneous character of the main movements on the redoubt and the rail fence, both American and British, is clear and conclusive. Thus, John Burnham says: "Troops at the rail fence did not fire until after the fire began at the fort." E. Bancroft says: "There was about four minutes firing in the redoubt before opening from the rail fence." The Prescott MS. (Butler's History of Groton, p. 339, by the family, from information from Colonel Prescott) says: "The British were twice repulsed with great loss from the redoubt and from the fence. . . . They made a third attack, with great spirit, on the redoubt and at the fence. The redoubt was entered on the southern or south-eastern side, and at the same time the enemy advanced between the breastwork and the rail fence, to the rear of the redoubt." Judge Prescott writes of the third attack: "The artillery was directed to the opening between the breastwork and the rail fence; and, from the position they took, they raked the breastwork, drove the men into the redoubt, and did much execution within it. The Grenadiers and Infantry advanced, under the command of Generals Howe, Clinton, and Pigot, upon the southern and eastern side of the redoubt, making their attack on three sides of it at the same time." Stedman (British), in his "History of the War" (Vol. I., 129), says: "Another error certainly was, that, instead of confining our attack to the left wing only (the rail fence), the assault was made on the whole front. Their left was covered with nothing more than a breastwork of rails and hay, easy to be scrambled over; and behind it was an open hill which commanded their redoubt and lines."

The closing scene between four and five o'clock is sketched in a joint letter written by two excellent Connecticut officers,

Captain John Chester and Lieutenant Samuel B. Webb. This is dated "Cambridge, June 19, 1775. Monday morning, nine o'clock." They were in the same company which they led from Cambridge. They reached the line of the rail fence on the third attack of the British. They say: "On our march down, we met many of our worthy friends, wounded, sweltering in their blood, carried on the shoulders by their fellow-soldiers. Judge you what must be our feelings at this shocking spectacle; the orders were, '*press on*, *press on*, our brethren are suffering, and will be cut off.' We pushed on, and came into the field of battle, thro' the cannonading of the ships, — bombs, chain-shot, ring-shot, and double-headed shot flew as thick as hailstones, but thank Heaven few of our men suffered by them; but when we mounted the summit, where the engagement was, — Good God, how the balls flew! I freely acknowledge I never had such a tremor come over me before. We descended the hill (Bunker Hill) into the field of battle, and began our fire very briskly; the regulars fell in great plenty; but, to do them justice, they kept a grand front, and stood their ground nobly. Twice before this time they gave way, but not long before we saw numbers mounting the walls of our fort, — on which our men in the fort were ordered to fire, and make a swift retreat. We covered their retreat till they came up with us, by a brisk fire from our small-arms. The dead and wounded lay on every side of me; their groans were piercing, indeed; tho' long before this time, I believe, the fear of death had quitted almost every breast. They had now possession of our fort and four field-pieces, and by much the advantage of the ground." (Siege of Boston, fourth edition, pp. 415, 416.) Captain Chester, in a subsequent letter (Siege of Boston, 391), is more definite as to the place where they fought, and the manner of fighting. He says: "July 22, 1775. We joined our army on the right of the centre, just by a poor stone fence, two or three feet high and very thin, so that the bullets came through. Here we lost our regularity, as every company had done before us, and fought as they did, every man loading and firing as fast as he could."

The provincials retreated over Bunker Hill by the "Narrow Pass" to the main land. The British advanced to this hill, and from it cannonaded the provincials. At five o'clock General Howe was in full possession of the peninsula.

The British general immediately made use of the redoubt. This is seen by the orders issued from time to time in reference to it. They are found in Adjutant Waller's Orderly

Book,* kept during the summer on "Charlestown Heights." Thus, on the 19th of June, sentries were posted "in the redoubt lately stormed by the troops"; on the 20th, the redoubt was ordered "to be cleaned out, and a shed erected for sheltering the guard placed there"; on the 21st, the posts and rails were ordered "to be carried into the redoubt and piled up in order"; on the 23d of June, it was ordered that the guard of the stormed redoubt should, for the future, consist only of a corporal and six men; on the 2d of July, there were directions about firing "three cannon from the stormed redoubt"; on the 5th of August, all the working tools were ordered "to be lodged in the rebel redoubt"; on the 4th of September, the alarm guns were removed "from the rebel redoubt"; and on the 26th of October is this order: "The 45th and 2d Light Infantry will garrison the rebel redoubt." Thus the redoubt was constantly used by the British army during the summer, and then was garrisoned for the winter; and Lieutenant Page, as has been imagined and asserted, could not have delineated on Montresor's accurate ground-plan a fortification of magnitude and form which the British constructed on the site of the redoubt, and named it "Warren's Redoubt." There was no such fortification built when he was here. Beyond a doubt, he placed on his map the work planned by Gridley, the breastwork drawn by Prescott, and the line of rail fence begun by Knowlton.

The authorities which determine these renowned localities are as exact and satisfactory as the contemporary descriptions of them are clear and definite. They were not made to sustain a fanciful theory of the battle, nor in aid of the claims set up for a commander; but they were made in the sole interest of truth. They are historical evidence of the highest order. It is not too severe to characterize it as a piece of presumption for any one to write of this battle and neglect, much less to ignore, such a line of authority.

Besides the plans I have commented on, there are on this frame copies of all the pictures of the battle I know of —

* This is a manuscript in the possession of the Society. It is bound in parchment. It has on its covers "Theodore Dwight, Jr., New York. This book was found in an old house in the city, after having remained packed away for many years.—T. D., Jr." On the last cover is: "T. Dwight, Jr., Oct. 18, 1828." On the fly leaf is the following: "Lieutenant and Adjutant Waller's Orderly Book, commencing at Boston the twenty-second day of May, and ending the twenty-sixth day of January, 1776." The head line over the order of May 22, 1775, is: "General Gage's and Major Pitcairne's Orders, Boston Camp, 1775, May 22." The head line of the first order after the battle is: "June 18, Charlestown Hill. General Howe's Orders." The citations in the text are from this authority. Some of them may be found in the "Siege of Boston," p. 331.

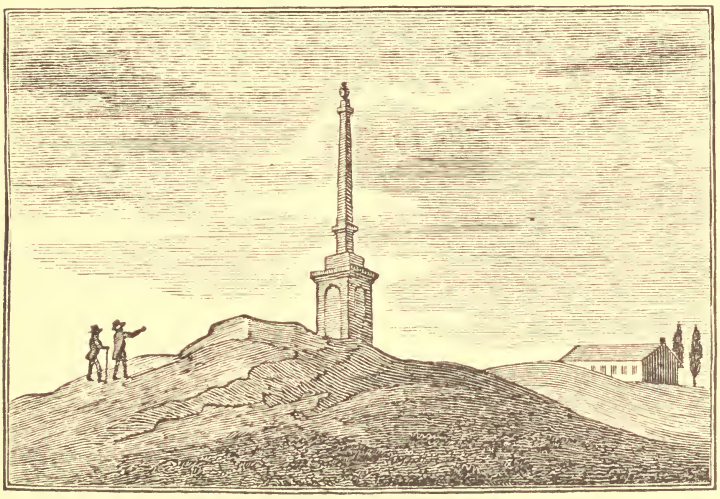
from the crudest of those of 1775, to the artistic productions of Trumbull and of Carter; also, all the maps of Boston and its environs, in 1775 and 1776. The one in French has the earliest engraving of the pine-tree flag I have met. But I will detain the Society only by remarks on a copy of the original engraving of a picture entitled: "An exact view of the late battle at Charlestown, June 17, 1775. In which an advanced party of about 700 Provincials stood an attack made by eleven regiments and a train of artillery, and, after an engagement of two hours, retreated to their main body at Cambridge, leaving eleven hundred of the enemy killed and wounded on the field." This has the following: "B: Romans in Ære incidet." It was published on a sheet in 1775. It is twenty inches by twelve in size.

The right of the picture is well filled to its whole height with a representation of a large tree then growing in Charlestown. One of the original maps of Boston and environs on the frame is from the "American Neptune," which I lent to the late Nathaniel B. Shurtleff, M. D. He had engraved from this the map in his "Topographical and Historical Description of Boston," and the large chart of the harbor. Its title is, "A Chart of the Harbor of Boston, composed from different surveys, but principally from that taken in 1769, by Mr. George Callender, late master of His Majesty's ship 'Romney.'" This chart has on it: "Published according to act of Parliament, by J. P. W. De Barres, Esq., August 5, 1775." It has delineated on it the military works around Boston. In the directions for sailing from Spectacle Island up the harbor, it has this: "Keep a remarkable large tree in Charlestown," &c. This shows that the artist of the battle did full justice to this feature of the town, however he may have done with perspective.

The "Pennsylvania Magazine," for September, has a picture evidently the same as Romans, with the following title: "A Correct View of the late Battle in Charlestown, June 17, 1775." It was engraved for this magazine by "Aitkin, Sculp." It is much smaller. There is no acknowledgment or description in the text.

The place where Warren fell can be ascertained from a map of Charlestown, made in 1818, by Peter Tufts, — the earliest I know of. It is on this frame. It has the first monument, built by King Solomon's Lodge, in memory of Warren and his associates, and dedicated in 1794. The address on that occasion was delivered by John Soley, Esq. I talked much with him on the battle. He informed me that it was

the design to place the monument on the place where Warren fell. To determine this there was a meeting of the survivors of the battle on the ground, who fixed on the spot where the monument stood. It was a few rods west of the present monument, outside of the enclosure, and in Concord Street. It was a Tuscan pillar, built of wood, eighteen feet high, raised on a brick pedestal eight feet square, and rising ten feet from the ground. The pillar terminated in a gilt urn, bearing the inscription "J. W., aged 35," — entwined with masonic emblems. The appearance of this monument and the ground is represented in the following engraving from the "Analectic Magazine," for March, 1818, where it is said that "it was taken on Breed's Hill, and may be depended upon for its accuracy."



By far the most interesting event connected with this monument was the reception here of "The Nation's Guest," General Lafayette, in 1824, in the presence of the municipal authorities, the military, and a great concourse of citizens. Among these were veterans of the Revolution, survivors of the battle, — such as Brooks, Dearborn, and the then Governor, Eustis. In such presence, Dr. Abraham R. Thompson made the following noble address to Lafayette: —

Sir, — In behalf of the inhabitants of Charlestown, the Committee of Arrangements present their respectful salutations to General Lafay-

ette, and bid him a cordial welcome to this town. This joyful occasion revives high national feelings and recollections, and touches the springs of gratitude by reminding us of that interesting period of our history which gave to our country a gallant hero, and to the rights of mankind a steadfast champion. While we participate in the thrill of delight which everywhere hails the visit of our illustrious friend, we cannot suppress the peculiar emotion of our hearts on receiving you, Sir, on the memorable heights of Bunker; on this holy ground, immortalized by the deeds, and sacred to the manes of Revolutionary Heroes. Over these heights Liberty once moved in blood and tears; her chariot on wheels of fire. Now she comes in her car of peace and glory, drawn by the affections of a happy people, to crown on these same heights, with civic honors, a favorite son, whose early strength was given to her sacred struggles, and whose riper years are now permitted to behold the splendor of her triumphs. In the fulness of our hearts we give thanks to Almighty God who has guided and guarded your high career of peril and renown.

Permit us, beloved General, again to welcome you to our bosoms, to express our ardent hopes that your valuable life may be prolonged to the utmost limits of earthly happiness; that the land which has been enriched with the dew of your youth may be honored as the asylum of your old age; that the country which now blends your fame with the mild lustre of Washington may henceforth hail you as a citizen of Washington's country; and that, during the residue of your years, you may live amidst the attentions, as you forever live in the hearts, of a grateful and admiring people.

Lafayette — his secretary, M. Lavasseur, says — "was much moved by this address, and his emotion was communicated to the bystanders." He replied: —

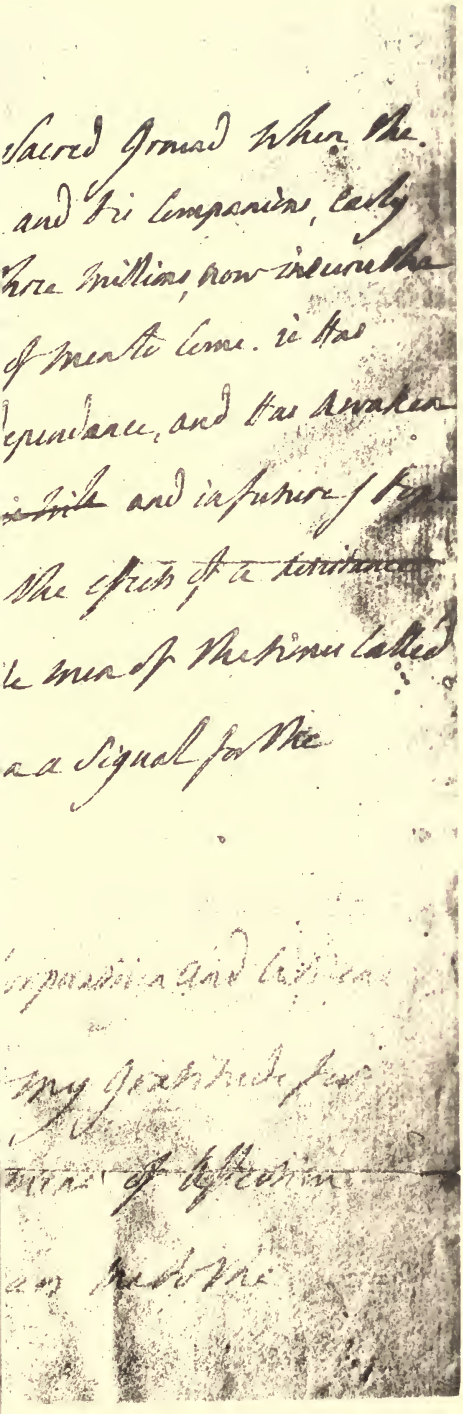
With profound reverence, Sir, I tread this sacred ground, where the blood of American patriots, the blood of Warren and his companions, early and gloriously spilled, roused the energies of three millions, has now insured the happiness of ten millions, and many other millions of men to come. It has called both American continents to Republican independence, and has awakened the nations of Europe to a sense, and in future, I hope, to the practice, of their rights. Such have been the effects of a resistance to oppression, which was, by many pretended wise men of the times, called rashness, while it was duty, virtue; and has been a signal for the emancipation of mankind.

I beg you, Sir, and the corporation and citizens of Charlestown, to accept the homage of my gratitude for your kind welcome, and for the old sentiments of affection and respect which for so many years I have entertained towards this town.

This pregnant answer "was received," Lafayette's secretary says, "by the acclamations of the multitude and the roar of artillery." The original manuscript of this reply was

With profound Reverence, Sir, I read the
Blood of American patriots, the Blood of brave
and gloriously Spirit, has roused the Energies of
Happiness of ten Millions, and many New millions
called both American Continents to Republican
the Nations of Europe to a Scene of Blood for
to the practice of their Rights. Such have been
two opportunities which was by many intended
Lafhard which is our duty, virtue, and the
Emancipation of Mankind.

I Beg leave, Sir, to and
of Charlestown keeps the Company
Your Excellency and of the
and Corps which for so many
Years



sacred ground when the
and Fri companies, early
three Millions, now in sure the
of meate time. it has
pendance, and has awaken
~~this~~ and in future of
the efforts of a territorian
le men of Virginia called
a a Signal for the

companies and Cadets
my Gentlemen for
~~men of Petersburg~~
and Independence

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

presented to Dr. Thompson by our late associate, the Hon. Edward Everett, with the following interesting letter: —

Edward Everett to Abraham R. Thompson.

WINTER-HILL, CHARLESTOWN,
29th August, 1826.

MY DEAR SIR, — On the day of the reception of Lafayette on Bunker's Hill, I had the honor to meet him at dinner at Governor Eustis's, in company with a very large party. Being very near the General, he entered into conversation with me on the subject of his visit to Bunker's Hill, and expressed himself much affected and delighted with his reception on that ever memorable spot. On my alluding to the gratification felt by the citizens at seeing and hearing him on that spot, he expressed an anxiety that what he had said in reply to your impressive address might be published correctly in the newspapers. I observed to him, that the best way to effect this object would be for him to commit to writing, from recollection, the substance of what he had said, and that I would take care that it was correctly printed. He was pleased with this suggestion, though there seemed to be no chance to carry it into execution, for he was not left alone a moment; and when he left the Governor's, where a party of eighty gentlemen were paying him assiduous attentions, he was to go to a large party of ladies and gentlemen at Mr. Sears's, in Boston, in the evening. He said, however, that he was determined, if possible, to steal aside for a moment for this object. In the evening, I met him at Mr. Sears's, and asked him if he had succeeded. He took from his pocket the paper accompanying this letter, and then containing only what is written in ink. "This," said he, "is all they gave me time to write at the Governor's, but it wants another sentence." Desirous to get from him the whole of this interesting reply, I urged him to finish it, with his pencil, on the spot. He was then surrounded by ladies and gentlemen pressing forward to be introduced to him, but said that, if I would make his apology, he would turn his back on the company and write the concluding sentence. This he did, in pencil, and from this memorandum his reply was printed in the papers; with one or two verbal changes, which the General desired to have made, to put it into the English idiom which, after forty years' disuse of our language, had partly escaped him.

The distinguished part, dear Sir, which you took on the interesting occasion of the reception of "The Nation's Guest" on the sacred soil of Bunker's Hill, entitles you to this little memorial of the man and of the day, which I beg you to receive also as a small token of the sincere respect of

Your faithful and obliged friend,

EDWARD EVERETT.

ABRAHAM R. THOMPSON, M. D.

I shall have the pleasure to invite you to repair to the site of the redoubt, to that of the breastwork, and to the line of the rail-fence protection, which I have had indicated on the

ground, by engineers, according to the accurate plan of Lieutenant Page; and after the inspection of these I hope you will all return here. I now beg to submit, without reading, a few contributions to the history of the battle, — American and British, — to be published with the proceedings of this meeting, if they shall be deemed appropriate.

The foremost contribution, in every respect, is Judge William Prescott's — the son of Colonel Prescott — account of the battle. It is the great character behind it that makes this manuscript a high authority. It is a careful copy of a paper, in his handwriting, which he presented to our late illustrious associate, Jared Sparks; who, with a generosity that was characteristic, gave me permission to take a copy. This was done Jan. 28, 1848. It has not been printed. It is quite different from what, in a late account of the battle, is called "The Prescott Manuscript." This, written by members of the family, may be found in Butler's History of Groton, p. 330. Accompanying the present account, is an important letter written by Judge Prescott to Colonel Samuel Swett, in 1838, on the question of command.

[The papers submitted by Mr. Frothingham are here printed.]

Judge Prescott's Account of the Battle of Bunker Hill.

On the 16th of June, 1775, the commander-in-chief, General Ward, placed under the command of Colonel William Prescott, of Peppereli, an officer who had distinguished himself in the war of 1756, three Massachusetts regiments * and a company of one hundred and twenty men from Connecticut, commanded by Captain Knowlton, a brave officer who afterward fell in the service, with written orders to proceed that night to Bunker Hill, and build such fortifications as he and Colonel Gridley, an experienced and scientific engineer appointed to accompany him, should judge best adapted to its defence, and as could be put in a condition to protect his men the next morning, — the detachment not to move till evening, and the orders not to be communicated before they had passed Charlestown Neck.

The detachment was drawn up on Cambridge Common a little after sunset, when a fervent and impressive prayer, it was said, was made by Dr. Langdon, President of Harvard College; and as soon as daylight was gone, about nine o'clock, it marched from the Common under the command of Colonel Prescott, who, after passing the Neck, called Colonel Gridley and the field officers around him, communicated his orders, and consulted them as to the plan intended for the fortification.

* Colonel Prescott's own, Colonel Frye's, and Colonel Bridge's regiments, and Captain Knowlton's company, — in all about one thousand men.

Bunker Hill was named in the orders, but the whole height, it is said, was at that time often called by that general name, although the southern part was known by the neighbors [as], and more properly called Breed's Hill. After some discussion the southern part, now known as Breed's Hill, was determined on. It was thought to be the place intended, as well as the best position. The consultation caused a delay of about half an hour. Colonel Prescott led the detachment directly to Breed's Hill, where Colonel Gridley immediately laid out a redoubt about eight rods square, and a breastwork extending from it northerly toward Mystic River. It was after eleven o'clock when they commenced building the redoubt.

Colonel Prescott, apprehensive that they might be discovered and attacked by the enemy in the night, before the works were in a condition to cover his men, accompanied an officer two or three times to the margin of the river, to satisfy himself that they had not been discovered, and was delighted to hear "All is well" drowsily repeated by the watch on board the king's ships. Daylight made the discovery. A heavy cannonade then commenced from Copp's Hill and the ships in Charles River, which much annoyed them, but did not materially retard their work. By nine o'clock, it became evident the enemy were preparing to cross the river, and attack the redoubt. The officers now came to Colonel Prescott, represented that their men had brought no provisions with them, had been on severe fatigue all night, and were dissatisfied, and in no condition for action; and urged him to send to the commander-in-chief and request him to relieve them according to his engagement, or at least to send a reënforcement and provisions. The colonel at once told them he would never consent to their being relieved; the fortifications were the works of their hands, and they should have the honor of defending them, which they could well do without any assistance; but he would send for reënforcements and refreshments, and had no doubt they would be promptly sent. They were satisfied. He accordingly despatched two men in the course of the forenoon to headquarters.— the last Major, afterwards Governor, Brooks. The latter procured an order for Colonels Stark and Reed of the New Hampshire line to march their regiments to his assistance. They arrived just at the commencement of the battle, and posted their regiments at the rail fence, on the left of the redoubt, where they were most needed, and where they fought with great spirit. The company commanded by Captain Knowlton was posted at the southern part of the rail fence (on the left) next to the breastwork, and the three Massachusetts regiments in the redoubt and at the breastwork, excepting one company which was stationed first in Charlestown, and afterwards at a rail fence south of the redoubt. This company retired into the redoubt during the action. No provisions were received, and the works were left to the defence of the brave men who built them, already exhausted by hunger and fatigue. The cannonade was a severe trial to raw soldiers who had never heard the sound of artillery, and unfortunately a private was killed, outside of the works, early in the day. To inspire them with confidence, Colonel Prescott himself mounted the

parapet, walked leisurely backwards and forwards, examining the works and giving directions to the officers; and one of his captains, understanding his motive, did the same thing while superintending the labors of his company. It had the effect intended. The men soon became indifferent to the fire of the artillery, which, though incessant, did but little injury to them or the works.

The first detachment of the British landed at Morton's Point, in Charlestown, about noon, under General Howe, who, observing the numbers on Breed's Hill, and advancing to it, as he thought, sent to Governor Gage for a reënforcement, which arrived a little after the first detachment, probably something after two o'clock. General Howe had the command of the whole; Brigadier-General Pigot was second in command. The action commenced between two and three o'clock in the afternoon. The day was clear and very hot. The British advanced in two divisions, — their right under General Howe against the rail fence; and the left, and largest division, under General Pigot, against the redoubt.

As soon as Colonel Prescott perceived that the enemy were in motion, he went round the works to encourage and animate his inexperienced soldiers; assured them the red coats would never reach the redoubt if they would observe his directions, — withhold their fire until he gave the order, take good aim, and be particularly careful not to shoot over their heads; aim at their *hips*. After this round, he took his post in the redoubt, well satisfied his men would do their duty. A few muskets only were discharged before he gave the order. The British advanced in line in good order, rather slowly, but with a confident, imposing air, pausing occasionally on their march, to let their artillery prepare the way, and firing as they advanced. Colonel Prescott waited till they had approached within eight rods, as he judged, of the redoubt, and then gave the order "*to fire.*" There was a simultaneous discharge from the redoubt and breastwork, and nearly the whole front rank of the enemy fell, and the whole body was brought to a stand for an instant. The fire was continued by the Americans and briskly returned by the British for a few minutes, and then they retreated precipitately to the foot of the hill. Colonel Prescott said they had commenced firing too soon, and generally fired over the heads of his troops; and, as they were partially covered by the works, but few were killed or wounded. The right of the British, under General Howe, advanced at the same time upon the Americans posted at the rail fence and on the beach, who received them with equal spirit, and, by their deadly fire, compelled them also to retreat.

Colonel Prescott, aware that the attack would soon be renewed, availed himself of this interval to praise and congratulate his new soldiers on their good conduct and success, and to inspire them with confidence in themselves, and renewed his caution to reserve their fire till he gave the command. He found them in high spirits, elated by the retreat of the enemy, — the regulars were no longer invincible in their eyes. The British were soon rallied, and again gallantly advanced to the assault, in the same order as before, firing as they approached

within musket shot of the works. The Americans now withheld their fire till the enemy were supposed to have approached within five or six rods of the redoubt, and then the order was given. The discharge was simultaneous the whole length of the line, and although more destructive, as Colonel Prescott thought, than on the former assault, the enemy stood the first shock, and continued to advance and fire with great spirit; but, before reaching the redoubt, the continuous, well-directed fire of the Americans compelled them to give way, and they retreated a second time in greater disorder than before. Their officers were seen remonstrating, threatening, and even pricking and striking the soldiers, to urge them on, but in vain. Colonel Prescott spoke of it as a continued stream of fire from his whole line, from the first discharge until the retreat. The ground in front of the works was covered with the dead and wounded, some lying within a few yards. The right wing of the British was again repulsed from the rail fence, and with great slaughter. Nearly the whole front rank was swept away by the first fire of the Americans, so that General Howe was seen standing almost alone, two of his aids having fallen by his side, if my recollection serves me. This was a triumph, and was felt as such by the soldiers; but it was destined to be short-lived. The interval was now longer, and Colonel Prescott again went among his men, encouraging and assuring them their enemies could never be rallied again if they were once more driven back. They cheered him; said they were ready for the red coats again. Not a man was seen to shrink from his duty, although the scene was new to most of them, and many of their companions were lying dead around them. Colonel Prescott, however, foresaw with great concern that their ammunition must be nearly exhausted, and, on conferring with his officers, found his worst apprehensions confirmed. He learned from them that the men had little, almost no, ammunition left, and he knew that they were destitute of bayonets. A few artillery cartridges were discovered, which he ordered to be opened, and the powder distributed among the soldiers, exhorting them not to waste a kernel of it, but to make it certain that every shot should *tell*. He had sent to the commander-in-chief in the morning for ammunition, but it was not in the arsenal. During the battle, General Howe gave orders for burning Charlestown, under pretence that the Americans posted there fired on his troops. This wanton outrage irritated, but nothing intimidated, the Americans, and fortunately the wind soon after shifted, and blew the smoke from the hills. General Howe, exasperated by the repeated repulses of his troops, now determined to concentrate his forces on the redoubt, the principal post, and carry it with the bayonet. It was said his officers remonstrated against another attempt, as a useless waste of life, but he would not listen to them. However this may be, he wisely gave orders for the troops to disencumber themselves of their knapsacks, advance in column, and enter the redoubt with fixed bayonets, without firing a gun. General Clinton, observing from Copp's Hill the former repulse, had come over as a volunteer, and arrived just in season to render essential service in rallying and leading the disheartened troops to their last desperate assault. They were soon seen moving in column up the

hill, the officers encouraging and forcing them on. It was apparent that they did not move with the same confident air as in their former attacks. General Howe had put himself at their head, and was distinguished, as he approached, by his figure and gallant bearing. The artillery was directed to the opening between the breastwork and the rail fence, and, from the position they took, they raked the breastwork, drove the men into the redoubt, and did much execution within it. The grenadiers and infantry advanced under the command of Generals Howe, Clinton, and Pigot upon the southern and eastern sides of the redoubt, making the attack on three sides of it at the same time. A few straggling muskets only were discharged as they advanced. The Americans having, some only one, and none more than three or four, rounds of ammunition were now directed to reserve their fire till the enemy were within twenty yards, when they poured on them a deadly volley, which made them waver for an instant, and then they sprang forward without returning it. The fire from the redoubts was continued for a few minutes, but soon slackened for want of ammunition, and the British advanced to the wall, which then served as a cover to the front ranks of their columns against the fire of the Americans. Those of the latter who had no bayonets were ordered to retire to the back part of the redoubt, and fire on the enemy as they shew themselves on the parapet. The redoubt was entered at the southern side or angle. The first officer and whole front rank were shot down as they mounted, among them the gallant Major Pitcairn, as I have always understood. By this time, the ammunition of the Americans was wholly exhausted. The discovery of another cannon cartridge furnished powder for the last muskets that were fired. The Americans, destitute of bayonets, had nothing but the butts of their guns to resist the entrance of the enemy with, and many of them used the barrels after the stocks were broken. The British had entered the redoubt, and were advancing, when Colonel Prescott ordered a retreat. He was among the last, and before leaving it was surrounded by the enemy who had entered, and had several passes with the bayonet made at his body, which he parried with his sword, of the use of which he had some knowledge. His banyan and waistcoat were pierced in several places, but he escaped unhurt. The men retired through the sallyport in the rear, and some jumped over the walls; they were met, and many killed by the fire of the British, who came round the angle of the redoubts, and who had turned the north-eastern end of the breastwork, and not a few, in passing the neck, by cannon and grape shot from the "Glasgow" and floating batteries that lay in Charles River. Here the brave McClary fell. There was no order in the retreat; every one saved himself as he best could, after leaving the works.

Colonel Prescott always thought he could have maintained his post with the handful of men under his command, exhausted as they were by fatigue and hunger, if they had been supplied with sufficient ammunition and with bayonets. In their last attack, the British wavered under the first fire of the Americans, and if it could have been continued, he felt confident they would have been repulsed, and would never have rallied again.

Before his return to Cambridge, Colonel Prescott repaired to head-quarters, reported his proceedings, the issue of the battle, which was already too well known, and received the thanks of the commander-in-chief, whom he found under great apprehension lest the enemy, encouraged by success, should advance on Cambridge, where there was neither artillery, ammunition, nor disciplined troops to oppose them. Colonel Prescott assured him the enemy's confidence would not be increased by the result of the battle, and offered to retake the hill that night, or perish in the attempt, if he would give him fifteen hundred men, three regiments, well equipped with ammunition and bayonets. The commander-in-chief thought, and probably justly, that the character and condition of his inexperienced army would not justify so bold a measure, and it may be doubted if so many bayonets could have been found. It was, however, afterwards seen that General Howe's reception at Bunker Hill had converted a bold into a cautious if not timid officer, during the remainder of his command.

A question has been made as to the command on the day of the battle. In a regularly organized army, this question could never have arisen, but in this case the orderly book of the commander-in-chief is silent, and there is no original document to be found to settle it. Irregularities were to be expected in the military proceedings of an army composed, as this was, of new levies, or rather of volunteers from different provinces. The commander-in-chief had no authority but what he derived from the Congress of Massachusetts. Contemporaneous history, and memoirs corroborated by subsequent histories and historical and biographical compilations, are the authorities, I suppose, most to be relied on in settling a question of this character. All these, with the exception of Botta, agree that the original detachment was placed under the command of Colonel Prescott,* and that he commanded at the redoubt during the action. Gordon states this. General Heath says he was the proper commanding officer at the redoubt. General Lee expressly states that Colonel Prescott commanded on Breed's Hill. Heath was a general officer, and member of General Ward's council of war that ordered the enterprise, and had the best means of knowing the fact. Indeed, he could not have been ignorant. Dr. Gordon lived in the neighborhood, and wrote his account the same year; and General Lee was an officer in the army, served through the war, and wrote his history nearly thirty years ago, when there was no controversy about it. Dr. Holmes in his Annals, and Judge Marshall in his History, concur in the account that the command of the detachment † was given to Colonel Prescott. Both General Wilkinson and General Dearborn state that the original detachment was put under Colonel Prescott, and that he commanded at the redoubt, and give many particulars of the battle. Subsequent compilers generally adopt or concur in these accounts.

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* Gordon's Hist. of Am. Rev., p. 39. Heath's Memoirs, pp. 19, 20. H. Lee's Mem., pp. 53–55.

† *Vide* C. Coffin's Pamphlet entitled *Hist. of Battle of Breed's Hill.*

Botta* says the detachment was placed under Colonel Prescott, and that General P. directed in chief, and held himself in readiness to repair to any point. Botta was a foreigner, and had not the same means of obtaining correct information the other writers possessed. The want of correctness in other parts of the battle proves this. Had General P. commanded, it must have been notorious here, and would in all probability have been stated by the American historians. General Humphrey's essay on the life of General P. is too full of mistakes to be referred to as an authority for any thing on this subject. It is stated by Generals Heath, Lee, and Wilkinson, that General Warren came on to the heights as a volunteer, in an early part of the action, declined assuming the command, and gallantly fought with his musket at the redoubt until he fell, which was probably on his retreat.

The sketch of the battle by General Wilkinson published in 1816, and the account of it published in 1818 by General Dearborn, with sundry affidavits accompanying it, were thought by the friends of General Putnam to reflect injuriously on his military conduct on that day. To repel these charges or statements, and, as it would seem, to show that he really had the chief command, and conducted himself with courage and military skill on that occasion, they availed themselves of the meeting of the old soldiers, on laying the foundation of Bunker Hill monument, to take a great mass of affidavits, declarations, and statements, extracts from which are appended to Mr. Swett's account of the battle.

I had no knowledge of Wilkinson's or Dearborn's account of the battle, or of the affidavits accompanying the latter, or of those taken by General P.'s friends, till I saw them in print. The latter were mostly by subalterns or privates, over threescore and ten when they undertook to state what they heard and saw half a century before, in the confusion of an irregular battle. It will be the province of the historian to determine what weight such evidence, if evidence it can be called, is entitled to in settling a question of this character.

Upon a careful examination and comparison, however, of these loose *ex parte* statements, I believe it will appear, as far as any inference can safely be made from them, that General P.'s conduct was that of a patriotic, ardent volunteer, rather than of a commander-in-chief on the day of and during a perilous battle.† It does not appear that he brought any troops on to the field, or gave a command to a field officer during the day, or even gave an order or command to Colonel Pr. There are two circumstances which seem to show that Colonel Pr. at the time thought himself chief in command. One is the conversation

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* 1 Botta's Hist. pp. 297, 298.

† The affidavits and statements show, if they show any thing, that General P. went to Cambridge between one and two o'clock of the 17th, was at ploughed hill between two and three o'clock, and was seen on the north-west side of Bunker Hill dismounted during the action. These seem not to be the positions of a commander on the eve or in the hour of battle. *Vide* Dearborn, Trevett, and Wilkins S. Bassett, and Deacon Miller's affidavits and statements.

between him and General Warren, when the latter entered the redoubt, and Colonel Pr. proposed to surrender the command to him. Indeed, both then seem to consider Colonel Pr. as the commander. The other and more decisive fact is Colonel Pr.'s sending for reënforcements and refreshments for his troops, without consulting General P. or any superior officer. It appears that Colonel Pr., in the forenoon of the seventeenth, without consulting General P., who is supposed to have been on the heights, despatched two messengers, the last Major Brooks, to headquarters, requesting, in his own name, reënforcements and provisions for his men. Had General P. been the commander, it would have belonged to him to determine on the measure and make the application. No subordinate would have ventured to do it. Colonel Pr. I am certain, would not. The redoubt and breastwork were united, and were the principal post. The defences, at the rail fences and other points, were subsidiary, though bravely made. There were, no doubt, great irregularities in some parts of the field, especially in the rear; but good order was preserved in the original detachment until the retreat.

Colonels Stark and Reed came on to the ground a short time before the battle commenced, and judiciously posted their regiments at the rail fence, and some companies on the beach. There seems to have been no opportunity for communication between them and Colonel Pr., and I have no knowledge that there was any. Generals Wilkinson and Dearborn represent them to have fought their own corps, without receiving orders from any one.

I have always understood and believe that the detachment was originally placed under the command of Colonel Pr., with orders in writing from the commander-in-chief; that they marched to Breed's Hill under his command, and there threw up the works; and that neither General Putnam nor any other officer ever exercised, or claimed, any authority or command over him, or the detachment, before or in the battle, — that General Putnam was not in the redoubt during the action. All this I have often heard stated by my father, as well as other officers of the detachment. General P., unhappily, was impaired by paralysis as early as 1780, which obliged him to retire from the army.

(A.)

"William Prescott was the son of the Hon. Benjamin Prescott, of Groton, and served as a lieutenant of a company of foot under General Winslow in the troops raised by the province to assist in the capture of Cape Breton. He was then a young man, and distinguished himself so much in the campaign as to attract the particular notice of the commander-in-chief, who, at the close of it, urged him to accept a lieutenancy in the regular army; but he declined, probably not willing to leave his native country and adopt a military profession for life."

"In 1774, he was appointed colonel of a regiment of minute-men, organized under the authority of the Provincial Congress, and upon receiving intelligence, in the morning of the nineteenth of April, 1775, of the

advance of a detachment of British troops to Concord, he mustered his regiment, and immediately marched to meet them; but they had retreated, and he did not overtake them. He joined the American army at Cambridge, and, with most of his regiment, afterwards engaged in the continental service, as it was called, and served through the campaigns of 1775 and 1776, when infirm health and the situation of his family and private affairs obliged him to retire." "He was engaged in several skirmishes with the enemy in New York and New Jersey. Although much beloved by his soldiers, he was a strict disciplinarian." "In the autumn of 1777, Colonel Pr., with a company of volunteers composed principally of officers who had served under him, joined the northern army under General Gates, to aid in the capture of General Burgoyne, and remained until his surrender, and then returned home. This was his last military service. He resided in Pepperell during the remainder of his life, represented the town many years in the general court, and was one of the magistrates of the county."

"In 1786, the year of the insurrection in Massachusetts, when Job Shattuck and his associates assembled to prevent the sitting of the court, Colonel Pr. buckled on his sword again and went to Concord, where it was to be holden, to protect it. He died at Pepperell in 1795, in his seventieth year."

(B.)

Colonel Prescott had determined never to be taken alive. A few months before the battle, while he commanded a regiment of minute-men, his brother-in-law, Colonel Willard, was at his house; and, endeavoring to dissuade him from the active part he was taking against the king's government, among other things, suggested that, if he should be found in arms against it, his life and estate would be forfeited for treason. He replied: "I have made up my mind on that subject; I think it probable I may be found in arms, *but I will never be taken alive.* The Tories shall never have the satisfaction of seeing me hanged." He went on to the heights with that resolution. He was often heard to say, after the battle, that his great anxiety that night was to have a screen raised, however slight, for his men before they were attacked, which he expected would be early in the morning; as he knew it would be difficult, if not quite impossible, to make raw troops, however full of patriotism, to stand, in an open field, against artillery and well-armed and well-disciplined soldiers. He, therefore, strenuously urged on the work, and every subaltern and private labored with spade and pickaxe without intermission through the night, and until they resumed their muskets near the middle of the next day. Never were men in worse condition for action, — exhausted by watching, fatigue, and hunger, and never did old soldiers behave better.

(D.)

As Governor Gage and his staff, with some other officers, were watching the progress of the battle from Copp's Hill in Boston, he

handed his glass to Colonel Willard, one of his council, and asked him to look and see if he knew the person who appeared to have the command of the rebels. He looked, and told the governor he knew him well; it was Colonel Prescott, his brother-in-law, and that he was sorry to see him there. "Will he fight?" inquires the governor. "Yes," replied Colonel W., "he is an old soldier; he will fight as long as a drop of blood remains in his veins; it will be a bloody day, you may depend on it." "The works must be carried," was the reply.

(E.)

General Warren came to the redoubt a short time before the action commenced, with a musket in his hand. Colonel Pr. went to him and proposed that he should take the command, observing that he understood he had been appointed a major-general a day or two before by the Provincial Congress. General Warren replied: "I shall take no command here; I have not yet received my commission. I came as a volunteer with my musket to serve under you, and shall be happy to learn from a soldier of your experience." General Warren fought gallantly with his musket, and, unfortunately for his country, fell; but, whether killed during the battle or on the retreat is made a question. I believe it was just after he left the redoubt; but am not positive that I ever heard my father state it.

(F.)

My late friend, Dr. O. Prescott, states the fact. He says that soon after the battle he was at his uncle Colonel Prescott's house in Pepperell, and that he shew him his banyan and waistcoat, that had several holes pierced through, and rents made in several places in them, which he told him had been made by British bayonets on Bunker Hill. I, also, recollect the same thing. Holes were perforated in several places in both banyan and waistcoat.

(G.)

I have heard my father say that when he saw the British approaching the works on two sides, with artillery to enfilade the breastwork, their whole fire concentrated on his position, and advancing without firing a gun, he well understood their intention, and considered that the post must inevitably be carried; but he thought his duty and honor and the interest of the country required that it should be defended to the last extremity, although at a certain sacrifice of many lives. He gave directions to place the few men who had bayonets at the points where he considered the wall most likely to be scaled, and as most of them had a charge of ammunition, and many two or three left, and a few perhaps more, he waited till the enemy had advanced within about twenty yards, before he gave the order to fire.

The confusion in which every thing was involved at the commencement of our revolution has rendered it a question at this day, who had

the chief command of the American forces engaged in the battle of Bunker Hill. The redoubt and breastwork were unquestionably the most important post. The defence at the rail fence, and along the line to Mystic River, was necessary for the protection of the redoubt, but it was subsidiary. It is, I apprehend, from contemporary history, rather than from the opinions of superannuated subalterns and privates, given forty years after the battle, that the question is to be determined.

Judge Prescott here copies several accounts of the battle. 1. Botta's. Judge P. says: "General Putnam was never in the redoubt during the action, and never gave an order to Colonel Prescott. The redoubt was built under the direction of Prescott after the ground had been laid out by Colonel Gridley. General P. did not head the detachment from Cambridge to B. Hill, nor march with it."

2. The account in "Encyclopedia Americana" of Bunker Hill and Prescott. Breed's Hill, says the "Encyclopedia," was a more suitable station. Judge P. says: "This was the experienced engineer Colonel Gridley's opinion, and the other field officers who were consulted, — they thought it came within his orders. There was not then the distinction between Bunker's Hill and Breed's, that has since been made."
3. Gordon's account. 4. Marshall's. 5. Holmes's Annals. 6. General Lee's.
7. Tudor's account. Judge Prescott states that "Gridley advised building the redoubt on Breed's Hill."
8. Heath's. Judge Prescott says: "There can be no better authority than this as far as it goes."
9. Humphrey's. Judge Prescott says that Warren rode down alone. "General Putnam never brought up a reënforcement of any kind."
10. Extract from N. A. Review. 11. Wilkinson's account. 12. The paper closes with the following letter to Samuel Swett.

Hon. William Prescott to Colonel Samuel Swett.

Boston, Oct. 30, 1838.

My dear Sir, — I have received a copy of the second edition of the History of the Battle of Bunker Hill, some days ago, for which I thank you; and, the day before yesterday, the leaf which you propose to add to it. This, I think, would not be a fit place for the views and facts I intended to offer you.

When the first edition of the history was published, you had the goodness to send me a copy; but I never saw or heard of the second until eight or ten years after it was published. I have since repeatedly read it with great interest, and find most of the important facts stated, in substance, as I have understood them from my boyhood. There is one, however, in which I cannot concur with the statement in the history. This, as I understand it, represents that Gen. Putnam had the command of all the troops engaged in the action. I have not the smallest disposition to disparage Gen. P. or his services, but I believe

no authority or reason can be found for this supposition, other than his rank, and that he was on the heights during the battle.

The detachment that marched from Cambridge the night before, including the one hundred and twenty Connecticut men, was placed under the command of Col. Prescott, by an order in writing from the commander-in-chief, with instructions to proceed to Bunker Hill and fortify it till relieved. Col. Prescott conferred with his officers and Col. Gridley (Gen. Putnam might be present) as to the place intended for the fortification; but Col. Prescott took on himself the responsibility of deciding, as well he might, for on him it would rest.

I know from evidence that with me is conclusive, that Gen. Putnam never exercised any authority over this detachment, or any part of it; and that he never, at any time before, during, or after the battle, gave an order or command to Col. Prescott.

If you had proposed to revise your history before publishing the third edition, as I supposed you might when I wrote you, I intended to have submitted to your consideration my views fully on this point, and the evidence on which they are founded. But as the edition is already printed, and is the same with the second, it would now be useless to do it; for they could not be introduced, if you were so disposed, without creating an incongruity in the work. I have thought, however, as I highly appreciate other parts of the history, I ought, in fairness, to state to you my dissent from this.

I am, very truly, your friend and servant.

LETTERS ILLUSTRATING THE BATTLE.

James Warren to John Adams.

Watertown, June 20, 1775.

My dear Sir. — Since my last, I have the pleasure of several of yours. I am extremely obliged to you; and to continue your attention to me in this way, can assure you I don't fail to make use of any thing I think will serve the public from your letters. I communicated to both our Generals that Paragraph of your Letter containing Gen^{l} Lee's opinion of the Generals and character, particularly of Burgoyne. Yours p^{r} Messrs. Halls, I never rec'd till the day before yesterday. I have never seen those Gent^{n}; shall observe your recommendation when I do. You will doubtless hear before this reaches you of another action here on Saturday last, which terminated with less success on our side than any one that has taken place before. However, they have nothing to boast of but the possession of the ground. You will say that is enough. It is enough to mark with Infamy those who suffered it; but they have paid very dearly for it in the loss of many men. They landed about 2000. I can't learn who commanded them — were more than once repulsed by the Bravery of our men in the Imperfect Lines hove up the night before; who, had they been supplied with Ammunition & a small reinforcement of Fresh men, would, tho' under every disadvantage, have, in all probability, cut them to pieces. Here

fell our worthy & much lamented Fr^d^ Doct^r^ Warren, with as much Glory as Wolfe on the plains of Abraham; after performing many feats of Bravery, & exhibiting a coolness & conduct which did Honor to the judgment of his Country in appointing him a few days before one of their Major Generals; — at once admired & lamented in such a manner as to make it difficult to determine whether regret or Envy predominates. Had our brave men, posted on Ground Injudiciously at first taken, had a Lee or a Washington Instead of a General destitute of all military ability & spirit to command them, it is my opinion the day would have terminated with as much Glory to America as the 19th of April. This is our great misfortune, & it is remediless from any other quarter than yours. We dare not superceed him here — it will come well from you, & really merits your attention. That, & a necessary article which makes me tremble to name or think of, is all we want. Our men were harass'd all the morning by Cannon from 2 Batteries, 2 Ships, & a Bomb Battery; & altho' attacked by a great number of armed Boats, nevertheless made a stout resistance.

Some fatality always attends my attempts to write you. I am called away, & fear I shant be able to add another paragraph.

I must beg you would make my acknowledgments to Mr. Cushing, & my good Friend Mr. Adams, for their kind favors. I fully designed to have wrote them, but this Express goes so suddenly as not to give me an oppo^y^ — shall embrace the next, as well as to enlarge to you. The hurry of our affairs can hardly be described. We have just rec'd an acc^o^ by a man who is said to have swam out of Boston, that we killed and wounded 1000 of them; among the first of which is a General, Majors Sherrif & Pitcairn, & 60 other Officers. 70 officers wounded. The whole of the Troops landed at Charlestown were 5000. This acc^o^ is not improbable to me, but I cannot warrant the authenticity of it. I am, your Friend. Adieu.

J. Warren.

Mrs. Adams & family were well when I last heard from them. I have had great pleasure in conversing with Doct. Church, who gives me a good acc^o^ of your Spirit, Unanimity, &c. I am well pleased with most of your resolves. I cant however say that I admire the form of Gov^t^ prescribed; but we are all submission, & are sending out our letters for calling an Assembly. I hope we shall have as good an opp^y^ for a good Gov^t^ in some future time.

James Warren to Samuel Adams, June 21, 1775.—Extract.

The late action at Charlestown you will hear of before this reaches you. I gave our friend, J. Adams, an imperfect account of it, yesterday. I refer you to him, and having nothing to be relied on since, shall only say that, though the troops and tories in Boston exult much, I think they have nothing to brag of but the possession of the ground, and what was still of more consequence to us, the death of our worthy friend Dr. Warren. But you may depend on it, they have paid very

dearly for their acquisition. I believe we shall find their killed and wounded very great, perhaps not much less than 1000, and among them many officers. Their troops that came over it is said were 5000, commanded by Lord Howe. It is amazing how uncertain we remain to this time of many facts you might suppose we were fully possessed of. We are not at this time able to ascertain the number of our own men killed and wounded, though we have reason to suppose they will not greatly exceed 100. We are well pleased with the spirit and resolutions of your congress; we could only have wished you had suffered us to have embraced so good an opportunity to form for ourselves a constitution worthy of freemen. All bodies have their foibles. Jealousy, however groundless, may predominate in yours. We have, however, submitted, and are sending out our letters, and shall express our gratitude by this conveyance for your kindness and benevolence to us in this respect. Our good Major Hawley can be very sincere, and your brother Cushing I suppose likes it. He has relieved me by an intimation of a probability that you will regulate the constitution of all the colonies.

I must again refer you to my friend Adams for my sentiments of the situation of our own army. You would tremble to be possessed of the true state of it. Fine fellows you know our countrymen are; and want nothing but a general of spirit and abilities to make them a fine army. All our efforts, which are many, cannot supply that defect, — yours must do it. Could you believe, he never left his house on Saturday; but I shall add no more. I wish that was the worst of it. By the way, I must do justice to Thomas; he is a good officer, and is esteemed. We have no trouble with his camp, it is always in good order, and things are conducted with dignity and spirit in the military style. We yesterday chose Heath to succeed our friend Warren as second major-general. Whitcomb is the first. The humanity of the good Gen. Gage that we have heard so much of has reduced Charlestown to ashes, and will, I presume, treat all other towns in his power in the same manner. I am now called on and must conclude, with my regards, &c., to all our friends; and am, with my best wishes for every happiness to you, Your friend,

JAMES WARREN.

Samuel B. Webb to Silas Deane.

For SILAS DEANE, ESQ.,
at the Continental Congress,
Philadelphia.

Pr. Mr. Alexander's Express.

CAMP AT CAMBRIDGE, July 11th, 1775.

DEAR SIR, — Your several late letters I have received, and the Book. For your kind remembrance of me to the Commanding officers, I beg leave to return you my most hearty thanks.

General Putnam is a man highly esteemed with us; he has done me the Honor to appoint me his first Aid-De-Camp. Since which, I have

had the offer of being a Brigade Major from General Gates. They are both Honorable and agreeable posts. I shall for the present remain with Gen^{l} Putnam — this post will call me to be continually with the first company in Camp, by which I hope to improve.

Our commander-in-Chief, together with the other Gentlemen from the Southward, are highly esteemed by every class — they will be a means of Disciplining the Army, which was much wanted. Your friend Mr. Miller is a Gentleman my station will call me to be much with — he is very obliging to me, and I doubt not will do me every service in his power. I should have wrote you a very particular account of the late Battle fought in the Valley over Bunker's Hill, but supposed Col. Saltonstall or my Brother had forwarded you my letter I wrote them, which contained an exact detail of facts — I hope you have received them before this. Mr. Alexander, the Express, leaves town in half an hour, which will prevent my being as particular as I could wish. Our Army are now encamped on Prospect Hill, and have got nearly completed our grand Breastwork reaching from the Hill to Mystic River; on our Right we have completed several Redoubts and Breastworks not far distant from each other, so that our lines are now extended from Mystic over to Charles River. The Enemy are on Bunker's Hill, and are not idle — they are fortifying in the strongest manner possible. Their situation is amazingly strong; ten times their number could not route them. Directly in the front lies the narrow neck of Charlestown, on their right four floating batteries in Mystic River — on their left next Boston two ships and several tenders, floating batteries, &c., pointing directly across the Neck — by which it would be almost impossible to pass. We hourly expect them to sally out and attempt to carry our Lines. I am sorry to say we have not men enough; 'tis too true. Gen^{l} Washington has desired the Provincial Congress to send in the Militia to the number of 4 or 5000 till we can raise more men — this matter we at present keep a secret for fear our Enemies should take advantage of it, and make their attack in a number of different places, and by that means force our Intrenchments. But should they attempt it, 'tis thought by our commander that it will be the most bloody Engagement our American World ever knew — our men are Resolute and determined. On an alarm (of which we have had several within a week) our men seem cheerfully to fly to their Alarm posts. We have several thousands of Pikes, with 12 feet handles, which are placed along our Lines — and most certainly will be very useful if they attempt to scale the walls. I cannot think but 500 of them at Bunker's Hill at the time of the Battle would have been a means of saving our works; if we had we must have gained a complete victory — for after landing the troops the Boats were all ordered to Boston, that there was no retreat left for them. Fight, Conquer, or Die, was what their officers was plainly heard to say very often. Major Bruce, who served two years in Portugal with Gen^{l} Lee, told my brother Joe at the lines, that it was the hottest Engagement he ever knew; even, says he, the Battle of Minden did not equal it. For my part I confess, when I was descend-

ing into the Valley from off Bunker's Hill side by side of Capt. Chester at the head of our Company, I had no more tho't of ever rising the Hill again than I had of ascending to Heaven as Elijah did, Soul & Body together. But after we got engaged, to see the Dead and Wounded around me, I had no other feelings but that of Revenge; four men were shot dead within five feet of me, but thank Heaven I escaped with only the graze of a musket Ball on my Hat. I think it my duty to tell you the bravery of one of our Company — Edward Brown stood side by side with Gershom Smith in the Intrenchments. Smith fell, Brown saw his danger — discharged his own and Smith's gun; when they came so close as to push Bayonet over our small Breastwork — Brown sprang, seized a Regular's gun, took it from him and killed him on the spot, bro't off the gun in triumph, and has it now by him. In this Engagement we lost four brave men, and four wounded — the dead are Wilson Rowlandson, wounded, taken prisoner and since died in Boston Goal — Gershom Smith, Lawrence Sullivan, Roger Fox, killed on the spot — the four wounded are almost well. I had like to forgot to mention that Col. Parker, wounded in the thigh, was taken prisoner, and carried to Boston, where he lay in a Common Goal and died. Gen[l] Lee in particular is much put out; intends writing into Boston very soon in a severe way — and inform them what he thinks of their Barbarity, and further acquaint them that if they continue their savage cruelty that every King's officer on the continent will be closely confined. Indeed we all wish and expect they will be secured, especially Elliott of New York, who is a man of great Importance. My brother Joe has been with us a week, set off for home last evening — he had a cruel Interview within the Regular Guards on Charlestown Neck with Mr. Simpson and my unhappy Sister — but the officers forbid them any conversation about leaving town. My heart aches for them, but 'tis in vain — none can be permitted to come from under the clutches of that Tyrant Gage and his Infernal crew. Mr. Trumbull our Commissary is much beloved by all Ranks of people; 'tis lisped he may be appointed Commissary General of the American Army — none here is so well calculated for that important office — his extensive connexions enables him to procure every necessary with the greatest imaginable dispatch. I fancy he is recommended by our Gen[ls] which, with your and his other friends Influence, I doubt not will procure him the Fatiguing Birth. I have received many friendly services from him. I wish to add many particulars, but the Express waits. Capt. Chester is in a fair way to be appointed Major of Brigade. We have burnt the Regular Guard houses on Roxbury — little skirmishes happen almost every day — the king's troops come off second best. Major Miflin being very observing on the Marshes with his Glass has been complimented with half a dozen four and six pounders from the Ships and Batteries in Boston, but he is a small mark and came off clear. I beg you to write me particular whenever you have leisure.

Be assured I am, Dear Sir,

With Esteem Affectionately Yours,

Sam[L] B. Webb.

Silas Deane, Esq., Philadelphia.

From Diary of Lieut. Col. Eph. Storrs, of Mansfield, Ct. Copied by Jas. L. Storrs, verbatim.

JUNE.

1. "Some rain this morning, fair weather about 7. Sat out, took provisions and went forward to Westborough where we dined. Went forward to Buckminster's at Framingham, where we tarried. Disciplined William Abbe and Ezra Phelps for deserting the companies on our march."

2. "Ordered the companies to proceed as far as Leeson's in Waltham and make a halt for the night, then left them under the care of Lieut. Gray, and proceeded with Lieut. Dane to Cambridge, at Col. Lee's house, where we expected to have tarried; found 3 companies. Went to head quarters to Gen. Putnam, he came with us to our proposed quarters, looked for accommodations for my companies. Conclude to march in to-morrow. Came out to Watertown with Lieut. Dane; tarried there."

3. "Towards noon the companies arrived. Sat off with them to Cambridge; met Gen. Putnam on the road. Come to the house of Mr. Fairweather, where we make our quarters; after dinner went up to head quarters to show ourselves to the General; he recommends our being immediately provided for action."

4. "Lord's day. Heard Mr. Leonard our chaplin on the common."

5. "Attended prayers this morning with the companies. Spent some time in aprising the arms, &c., from Mansfield. Ordered the companies to discipline 15 men. Sent to clear the house at head quarters, after prayers at night at head quarters."

6. "Sent a letter to Mr. Salter respecting printing the sermon he delivered to our companies on our departure from Mansfield; had liberty for 4 of my men who have been here since the allarrum to return home on a furlough of 12 days. Deacon Freeman and Aaron Hovey at our lodgings. Walked the grand rounds with them and Col. Freeman to view the various fortifications in this place and at Charlestown."

7. "Unwell, bad cold. Returning from prayers had orders to take the command of the guard today; unacquainted with the business, unwell; however I am willing to learn my duty, as I have all the customs and rules of the camp to learn; not much sleep to-night, many prisoners. Some drunk, noisy and crazy."

8. "Relieved this morning, came home and went to sleep. Mr. Fairweather came home last night out of humor as they tell me. No

wonder, his house filled up with soldiers, and perhaps his interest suffers as it really must. Sent for me, yet appears to act the part of a gentleman. Went to sleep, took some refreshment and am some better, but have a bad cough."

9. "Went to Gen. Putnam to make return of my companies to draw soap, beer, &c., out of the Connecticut store; he declines coming to a settlement about it, my company uneasy for want of beer and soap for washing; many visitors from Windham."

10. "Not well; my constitution I fear is not strong enough for a campaign. Sat out with Lieut. Gray for Salem. Dined at Malden, went to Salem, got some clothing and tarried at the sign of the bell, extremely dry and dusty."

11. "Some rain last night. Sat out this Lord's day and came to Cambridge, meeting almost out when we came to the common. Lieut. Right, David Eldwag at our quarters; tarried there the night."

12. "At 12 o'clock attended on the field officers belonging to Connecticut and come into a conclusion directing the commissary. What articles and how much they are to deal to the men, as molases, chocolate, &c. Not well at night; to-day we hear there is 1300 regulars more arrived."

13. "Sat our men to making cartriges."

14. "Attended on the main guard rounds post; had a comfortable turn."

15. "Scarcely any sleep last night; in the morning before relieved, had news that our people were in an engagement at Roxbury, but proved to be nothing more than a firing of the regulars in Boston. Mr. Welch of Mansfield with his son dined with us to-day."

16. "Expecting an engagement soon, P. M. Orders came for drafting 31 men from my company, and the same from all the companies belonging to Connecticut. Sent off Lieut. Dana, Sergt. Fuller, Corporal Webb and 28 privates. Who at 8 o'clock went down to Bunker's Hill together, with a large detachment of the troops of this province, where they flung up an entrenchment."

17. "At sun rise this morning a fire began from the ships, but moderate; about 10 went down to Gen. Putnam's post who has the command. Some shot whistled around us. Tarried there a spell and returned to have my company in readiness to relieve them; one killed and 1 wounded when I came away."

"About 2 o'clock there was a brisk cannonade from the ships on the battery or entrenchment. At noon orders came to turn out im-

mediately, and that the regulars were landed at sundry places. Went to head quarters for our regimental. Received orders to repair with our regiment to No. 1 and defend it. No enemy appearing, orders soon came that our people at the entrenchment were retreating and for us to secure the retreat. I immediately marched for their relief, the regulars did not come off from Bunker's Hill, but have taken possession of the entrenchments, and our people make a stand on Winter Hill, and we immediately went to entrenching; flung up by morning an entrenchment about 100 feet square. Done principally by our regiment under Putnam's directions, had but little sleep the night."

18. "Gen. Putnam gave orders for the relief of our regiment; returned home much fatigued and wearied. Spent the remainder of the day in fixing those who were in the fight with ammunition, cartrige, &c. Lord's day."

19. "Have lost in the fight two men, Matthew Cummins and Philip Johnston killed at the breast work; 7 wounded, none I hope mortally. "This action was rather precipitate, the entrenchment exposed to the fire of all the ships, and in a place where the enemy landed their men under the cover of the cannon from the ships, and the post not sufficiently guarded; they forced the entrenchments without much difficulty."

20. "Went out to Roxbury; had some conversation with Gen. Spencer on last Saturday affair with the respect to the beginning on Bunker's Hill in the place where we did. Came home and found Mr. McCall, Mr. Leavens and Josiah Storrs at quarters; at night had orders to lie on arms. Went over to Watertown."

21. "I have lost one day I find on recollection."

22. "Went down to the hill in order to settle the matter respecting an armour for our regiment. Brother Eleazer came into town. Nothing remarkable transpired today. We hear from Boston there is 1000 regulars killed and wounded in the late action."

23. "An allarrum. News came that the regulars were landing, were in readiness for a march, but proved false. Numbers of people come in from Connecticut. Throng the house."

24. "An allarrum. Orders for us to parade on the general parade and wait further orders. No orders further, return back to quarters."

25. "Lord's day; on the main guard, nothing extraordinary; yesterday many cannon fired at Roxbury, 2 killed of our people."

26. "We hear a chief officer is appointed, Gen. Washington of Virginia, to supersede in the command of the troops here."

27. "Went to Roxbury with brother Eleazer to see Gen. Spencer, Col. Parsons, Captain Craft. Conclude that a place of safety."

28. "Ordered the remainder of the regiment that are now in town to meet at 4 o'clock; met them, had regimental exercise, wet before I got home."

Extracts from an Orderly Book, supposed to be Capt. Chester's.

Gen! orders, June 5th 1775.

Field officer of the day to morrow, Col. Patterson.
Field officer of the Piquett guard to night, Majr Pool.
Field officer of the Main guard to morrow morn, Lieut Col. Whitney.
Field officer of the Fatigue to morrow, Majr Jackson.
Adjutant of the day to morrow, Warner.
Parole, Salsbury; Countersign, Haverhill.

Gen! orders, June 6th 1775.

Parole, Glocester; Countersign, Topsfield.
Field officer of the day to morrow, Colo. Wm Prescott.
Field officer of the Piquett guard to night, Majr Putnam.
Field officer of the Main guard to morrow, Lieut. Col. Jones.
Field officer of the Fatigue to-morrow, Lieut. Col. Robinson.
Adjutant of the day to morrow, Green.

Gen! orders June 7th 1775.

Parole, Springfield; Countersign, Northumberland.
Field officer of the day to morrow, Col. Gardiner.
Field officer of the Piquett guard to night, Majr Durkee.
Field officer of the Main guard to morrow, Lieut Col. Hutchinson.
Field officer of the Fatigue to morrow, Maj. Baldwin.
Adjutant of the day to morrow, Hunt.

That the commanding officer of each regiment, detachment and company, make a complete return of the number of his respective reg. detachment, or company, the number of arms suitable for service and how many rounds each man is furnished with.

Samr Osgood, Majr of the Brigade.

Regimental orders.

That the commanding officer of each company shall see his company turned out at the beating of the revelle and be on the grand parade by sunrising and there to be exercised by their regimental officer, till prayers and then attend the same, and each officer see his men are well dressed, shaved and hair combed and cleaned, no blankets on. That no sentry march down on his post, but back and forth and keep a good look out.

Gen^{l} orders, June 8th 1775.

Parole, Shelburn; Countersign, Conway.
Field officer of the day to morrow, Col. Scammon.
Field officer of the Piquett guard to night, Maj^{r} Brooks.
Field officer of the Main guard to morrow, Lieut. Col. Moulton.
Field officer of the Fatigue to morrow, Maj^{r} Stacy.
Adjutant of the day to morrow, Marshden.

Regimental orders.

That the commanding officer of each company see his company parade on the grand parade by 4 o'clock in the afternoon in order for regimental exercises. That each commanding officer see that his clerk calls over the roll every morning and evening before he marches to the grand parade and see that they are all there; that each commanding officer see these as well as the regimental orders of yesterday punctually obeyed or he may depend on suffering according to the rules of war; by order of Gen. Putnam.

Adjutants orders for to morrow. Draught from Cap. Chesters comp^{y} 1 sub^{n} 1 cor^{l} and 15 privates for the Main guard.

Gen^{l} orders, June 9th 1775.

Parole, Sunderland; Countersign, Montague.
Field officer of the day to morrow, Col. Nixon.
Field officer of the Piquett guard to night, Maj^{r} Woods.
Field officer of the Main guard to morrow, Lieut. Col. Bond.
Field officer of the Fatigue to morrow, Maj^{r} Wood.
Adjutant of the day to morrow, Holden.

Adjutants orders for to morrow; draught from Cap. Chesters company 1 serg^{t} 1 cor^{l} and 15 privates for Main guard.

Gen^{l} orders, June 10th 1775.

Parole, Northfield; Countersign, Brimfield.
Field officer of the day to morrow, Col. Gerish.
Field officer of the Piquett guard to night, Maj^{r} Butterick.
Field officer of the Main guard to morrow, Lieut. Col. Bricket.
Adjutant of the day to morrow, Feebiger.

Adjutants order for to morrow; draught 1 sub^{n} 1 cor^{l} 1 serg^{t} and 24 privates for Main guard to morrow.

Gen^{l} orders, June 11th 1775.

Parole, Glinn; Countersign, Wilks.
Field officer of the day to morrow, Col. Mansfield.
Field officer of the Piquett guard to night, Maj^{r} Putnam.
Field officer of the Main guard to morrow, Lieut. Col. Clark.
Field officer of the Fatigue to morrow, Maj^{r} Poor.
Adjutant of the day to morrow, Putnam.

Gen^{l} orders, June 12th 1775.

Parole, York; Countersign, Kettery.
Field officer of the day to morrow, Col. Woodbridge.
Field officer of the Piquett guard to night, Maj^{r} Wood.
Field officer of the Main guard to morrow, Lieut. Col. Parker.
Adjutant of the day to morrow, Montague.
Adjutants orders for to night and to morrow; draught 1 serg^{t} and 8 privates for the Piquett guard to night and 1 sub^{n} 1 cor^{l} and 9 privates for the Main guard to morrow.

Gen^{l} orders, June 13th 1775.

Parole, Woburn; Countersign, Concord.
Field officer of the day to morrow, Col. W^{m} Prescott.
Field officer of the Piquett guard to night, Maj^{r} Stacy.
Field officer of the Main guard to morrow, Lieut. Col. Robinson.
Adjutant of the day to morrow, Hardy.
That a general Court Martial be held this day at 9 o'clock at the school house to try all such persons as shall

	Capt. Coit	Capt. Foster
	„ Bancroft	„ Webb
Col. Fry, President	„ Frances	Lieut. Theyer
Jo^{s} Trumble, Esq., *Judge Advocate*	„ Newel	Capt. Gooden
	„ Leason	„ Porter
All evidences to attend.	„ Butler	*Members.*

Adjutants orders for to morrow; draught 1 serg^{t} 1 cor^{l} and 17 privates for Main guard.

Gen^{l} orders, June 14th 1775.

Parole, Welles; Countersign, Berwick.
Field officer of the day to-morrow, Col. Gardiner.
Field officer of the Piquett guard to night, Maj^{r} Jackson.
Field officer of the Main guard to morrow morning, Lieut. Col. Stores.
Adjutant of the day to morrow, Hunt.

Regimental orders.

That the commanding officer of every company belonging to Connecticut now stationed in Cambridge, excepting Capt. Knowlton, in case of an alarm shall repair to the ground where Lieut. Waterman is now encamped; there parade and wait for further orders. The officer of each company view their firelocks and see that they be fit for action and each man provided with 18 rounds of cartriges and two flints or more and in case of an engagement that no man fire over a batalion

engaged in battle or at any other time unless he is very sure of his mark. That the officer of each company parade with his own men on the grand parade at sunrising and at 4 o'clock in the afternoon.

Gen! orders.

That every Colonel of each regiment, take and keep a list of his men their names, when enlisted, place of residence, age, stature and complexion, and order the roll to be called over every morning and evening; all officers see that tumults and differences in his camp be supprest; that all soldiers repair to their barracks and tents after the beating of the tattoo, on penalty of being confined; that there be no noise in camp after 9 o'clock at night; that the field officer of the day take special care to prevent all grogg shops, and if any owners of them continue to sell spirituous liquors to the soldiers, he is ordered to stand all their liquors; all officers see that their men attend upon prayers morning and evening, also their service on the Lords with their arms ready to march on an alarm, that no drums beat after the parson is on the stage, and the men immediately attend; that the commanding officer of each reg.t see that their arms and ammunition be viewed daily, and that there be none wanting; that every reg.t keep a quarter guard. Adju.t orders; draught 1 sub.n 1 serg.t and 17 privates for fatigue.

Gen! Orders, 15.th June 1775.

Parole Taunton; Countersign, Rehoboth.
Field Officer of the day to morrow, Col.n Scammons.
Field Officer of the Piquett Guard to night, Maj. Durkee.
Field Officer of the M. Guard to morrow, Lieut. Col. Nixon.
Adjutant of the day to morrow — Marshden.

That the respective Officers that furnish men for the Piquett guards, strictly examine their arms and ammunition, before they march, to see that the arms and ammunition of the piquet guard be strictly examined before they go upon duty by the commanding officer of the piquet.

Adjutants Order; Draught from Capt. Chesters Company 1 Sub.n 1 Serg.t 1 Corp.l and 24 privates for quarter guard at Gen. Putnams head quarters to morrow at 8 o'clock.

Gen. Orders, 16.th June 1775.

Parole, Lebanon; Countersign, Coventry.
Field officer of the day to morrow, Col. Nixon.
Field officer of the Piquett Guard to night, Maj. Brooks.
Field officer of the M. Guard to morrow, Lieut. Col. Hutchinson.
Adjutant of the day to morrow — Holden.

Adj.ts Orders; Draught from Cap. Chesters Comp.y 1 Serg.t and 13 privates for fatigue to morrow, and 3 privates for advance guard to night.

Special orders; Draught from Capt Chesters Comp.y 1 Sub.n 1 Serg.t & 28 privates, and appear on the grand Parade equiped with ammunition, Blankets and one days provision at 5 o'clock P. M.

Gen^{l} Orders, June 17th 1775.

Parole, Deerfield; Countersign, Conway.
Field Officer of the day to morrow, Col^{l} Geerish.
Field Officer of the Piquett Guard to night, Maj. Wood.
Field Officer of the Main Guard to morrow, Lieut. Col. Baldwin.
Adjutant of the day to morrow — Feebiger.

Adjutants Orders; Draught 1 Serg^{t} and 10 privates from Capt. Chesters Company to parade at 5 o'clock Equipt with 2 days provisions ready drest & Blankets in order to march to the assistance of the Connecticut Troops at Charlestown per order Gen^{l} Putnam.

Letter of William Williams.

To the Hon^{ble}

ELIPHALET DYER,
ROGER SHERMAN,
SILAS DEAN,
Delegates at the Gen^{l} Congress, &c.
Philadelphia.

Pr Express.

LEB^{N} 20th June, 1775. 10 o'Clo, at night.

DEAR GENT, — The Governour's Letter you will receive by this Express — had introduced the action commenced at Charlestown on Sat^{y} morn'g last, and stop'd to wait further Intelligence, having then (a few hours since) a very broken acc^{o} of y^{e} matter; he will himself add, I suppose, what further has just come by Capt. Elij. Hyde of this Town. The sum of his Information as I recollect it is, viz. about 1500 of y^{e} Massachusetts and Connecticut Troops by order possessed themselves of Bunker's Hill, Fryday night, & had made great progress in Intrenchments by the light of next morn'g, but not prepared to use what small Cannon they had. Soon as They were discovered, the ships within reach & a number of floating batteries mounted with cannon which had been prepared began a heavy Fire upon them, but did not greatly annoy them at first. About Two thousand Regular Troops also immediately crossed over to Charlestown and set the Town in Flames in various parts, (which all but a few scattered houses is consumed) and approached to attack the Hill. The Provincials sent of for Reinforcements, and in the mean time bravely resisted the Enemy. Recruits arrived before they had got very near, and kept their fire tho' perpetually fired upon till the Enemy got within ab^{t} 15 rods and then gave it a full loose, and made as they conceived very great destruction upon them, mowing down whole Ranks of them 12 deep, till they began to retreat apace, and the left of our Troops leaped their Breastwork, of a rail fence and pursued them fast abt. 20 rods, when perceiving their own right giving way (which 'tis found was occasioned by Gen^{l} Pomroys ordering them who were there in front, and had been on Fatigue all night faint and hungry, to give

back, intending only to make room for recruits just come up, but in the confusion it was misunderstood, and they all retreated on that wing), our troops perceiving their right to be giving back, and at the same time a large detachment of the Regulars who had unperceived made a largê circular march to the westward partly across Green's Hill above them, forcing into their Fort and Intrenchment which they had almost deserted, it was apparently prudent and necessary all to retreat, which they did without precipitation, carrying off all their wounded men, and possessed themselves of Green's Hill next above Bunker's, which they are now holding and fortifying and have done much to strengthen, leaving the latter in y^e^ possession of the Enemy, which they are also fortifying, and firing of y^e^ Cannon continued by turns when Mr. Hyde left y^e^ camp yesterday morning 10 o'clock. Some of our soldiers' packs and baggage fell into the Enemy's hands, y^e^ tools, perhaps all, and two or 3 field pieces, all they had with them. As near as could be come at we had lost in all between 40 and 70 killed and 140 wounded. They have lost 'tis not doubted many more, but we know not the number; a man escaped from Boston says he saw them land 500 wounded men. Among our wounded is Col. Gardner dangerously in y^e^ Groin and Hip, L^t^ Tho^s^ Grosvenor of Pomfret badly in the left hand, — the author of my news knows not any officer beside wounded, and does not mention any killed.

The ardour of Dear Dr. Warren co'd not be restrained by the entreaty of his bretheren of the Congress, &c., & he is, alas, among the slain. May eternal happiness be his eternal portion. Gen. Putnam's Regim^t^ were all in the action, save Capt. Mosely & Company who were absent on some other duty. Our Troops are in exceeding high spirits, & their Resolution increases, they long to speak with them again, and when the reinforcement was called for, it was difficult to keep any back. It was reported and believed some hours that Capt. Chester and Capt. Putnam were killed, but is a mistake as to both. I receive it that Gen. Putnam commanded our Troops, perhaps not in chief, and 'tis said is wounded, but bleive tis not so. Cannot learn who commanded y^e^ Regulars nor who is killed among them.

The same night another detachment of our forces began to intrench on Dorchester Hill, & a feint of attack and resistance was made by the Regulars, but nothing more done but firing and throwing carcases into Roxbury, which did some mischief to the Houses, but burnt none, and killed one Middletown soldier. They have, 'tis said, ceased their works by Gen^l^ Thomas order, but keep it guarded. What the next effort will be we know not, but hope to be prepared to resist it. One thing hinted at in his Honour's Letter is wanted much. Your most worthy Body will not cease your utmost in the cause, which we are far from despairing of. Have sketched this imperfect narrative in great haste and confined myself to that only. Your wisdom and zeal will be all employed for the whole, and for those in a meaner situation, &c., who must feel more sensibly than perhaps 'tis possible for remote Colonies. We have and wish no quarrel with the King, but only the despotic power of Parliament. Would not another petition addressed

to the people of Great Britain be of some avail, and also to the people of Ireland.

We have great Reason to bless the name of our God for so great a degree of success and advantage as we have had in the last as well as former conflicts, and to be deeply humbled for our sins. We rejoice that you have appointed a day of Fasting, &c.

I am, Dear Gent,

Your and our Country's
Steady Friend, &c.

WM. WILLIAMS.

Hon. E. DYER, Esq., &c.

Have heard Col. Hancock is impatient to get into the Army, I rather think his duty calls him to abide where he is at present.

Loami Baldwin to Mary Baldwin.

SUNDAY, 4 o'clock. CAMBRIDGE CAMP, June 18, 1775.

DEAR WIFE, — I am yet in the land of the living, and once more an opportunity to write to you; — Blessed be the name of God therefor. I am much fatigued and very dirty; should be glad you would send me a shift of linen. I was not in the battle on Bunker's Hill yesterday, but went with the recruits and met the men from the fort or breast-work, where there was a great number of cannon shot struck near me, but they were not suffered to hurt me.

I have nothing in particular to inform you of, but only we are intrenching on the Hill between Cambridge and Charlestown north of the stone house, where the Regulars have fired a great number of cannon at us, but have not injured us any at all.

In haste I conclude with most ardent affection, your friend and husband. L. BALDWIN.

N. B. — My duty to my parents & Love to Brother and all friends. Please send me some W! rum if you have an opportunity.

Letter of John R. Adan.

BOSTON, Dec. 21, 1841.

DEAR SIR, — In compliance with your request, I proceed to give you some account of my interview with a gentleman, named Ewing, some few years since. I was returning with a friend from a journey, and met with Mr. E. at Princeton in this State, where I arrived in the afternoon, and remained until the next day. My friend introduced me to Mr. Ewing. He was advanced in years, quite intelligent, and courteous in his manners. Finding that he had adhered to the British in the Revolutionary war, and that he had been intimate with many of the leading men in that struggle, I put many inquiries to him concern-

ing them, and the scenes in which they acted. He said he was in Boston when the battle of Bunker's Hill was fought; that, on the morning of the 17th of June, General Gage and the principal officers of the British army met in consultation at the "Province House," and that he (Mr. E.) called there for the purpose of ascertaining their views and intentions. He said he was at the Province House immediately after the arrangements for attacking the Americans had been made; that he met in the front yard of the house an officer of the name of Ruggles, who expressed himself warmly opposed to the decision of the other officers, and said that they had most imprudently decided to attack the Americans in front, — that it would cost many lives, — that the English officers would not believe that the Americans would fight, but that he knew they would fight desperately if attacked in the manner proposed; that his own advice had been to attack the Americans in the rear, and thus cut off their retreat, and prevent their receiving reinforcements, but that his opinion had been overruled. The event showed, said Mr. Ewing, that Ruggles had judged correctly. Never, said Mr. E., were there more amazement, disappointment, and distress felt on any occasion than I witnessed in Boston on the afternoon and night of that 17th of June. The slaughter had been so great that there were few who had not lost some relative or dear friend. There were so many wounded that the surgeons could not properly attend to all of them. Late in the afternoon of that day, Mr. E. said he was passing through Orange Street (now part of Washington Street), and met a physician (I think Dr. Hast) in his gig. He stopped and informed Mr. Ewing that his friend Major Pitcairn was severely wounded, and that General Gage had sent a request to the Doctor that he would call on Pitcairn, as the regular surgeons were too busy to attend to him properly. Knowing the intimacy that existed between Ewing and Pitcairn, he requested the former to accompany him in his visit, and he did so.

Soon after Major P. was wounded, he was brought over to Boston, and was removed from the boat to a house on the north easterly side of Prince Street, near the present Charles River Bridge. We found him, said Mr. E., in a chamber there, lying on a bed, with a sheet thrown over him. The Doctor told him that General Gage was very anxious about him, and that he made the visit by his request. Pitcairn, with his usual courtesy, requested the Doctor to thank the General for thinking of him in a time of so much trouble, and added that he believed he was beyond all human aid. The Doctor asked him where he was wounded. He laid his hand on his breast, and answered "Here, sir." The Doctor attempted to raise the sheet for the purpose of examining the wound. The Major kept his hand on the sheet and said: "Excuse me; it is useless; my time is short; you cannot do any thing for my relief; my wound must cause death immediately; I am bleeding fast internally." "But let me *see* the wound," said the Doctor; "you may be mistaken in regard to it;" and again he attempted to raise the sheet. The Major pressed it to his bosom and said: "Doctor, excuse me; I know you can do nothing for me; and do not

argue the matter with me;" adding, with a smile, "It is not a fair argument between two persons, one of whom has but a few minutes to live, while the other, I hope, has many years of life before him. Let me say a few words to you about my private concerns." The Doctor then drew back. I bade Pitcairn farewell, and left them; and the Doctor informed me that the Major died within an hour afterwards. Pitcairn was a good soldier, a most excellent and exemplary man, and highly respected by all parties.

Another anecdote. I have never known whether the Americans had any flag at Bunker's Hill; but I have been told they had one, and that the British officers on Copp's Hill were endeavouring to discover what was painted on it. After puzzling themselves in vain for some time, a Mr. Mather said to them: "Give me your glass, I think I can read it." Taking it for a few seconds, he returned it, and said, "It is very plain; their motto is 'Come if you dare.'" But Mather was a whig. I have always thought the loss of the British underrated. An aged person, now deceased, who knew Gage well, heard him say that the British loss on the 17th was more than 1500 men. I have thus told you, I believe, all I promised, and have only one request to make; viz., that whatever use may be made of this letter, my name may not be mentioned. I have great aversion to seeing my name in print. With sincere respect and regard,

Yours,

J. R. Adan.

Copy of a letter from Brigadier General Jones, Colonel of the 52d regiment, to his friend at Halifax in Yorkshire, dated Boston, June 19.

"My much respected Friend,—On Saturday the 17th inst. there was a smart action on Charles town hill, facing this town, and about a mile and an half distant, where the rebels had taken post.—To dislodge them the grenadiers and light infantry companies, supported by six regiments, attacked them, entrenched up to their chins, and flanked by strong redoubts, which they carried, putting the rebels to flight, with great slaughter and consternation. The fate of the battle fell hard to the share of the 52d regiment; the officers and men behaved remarkably well, and gained immortal honour, though with considerable loss, as you have seen from the return of the killed and wounded. The rest of the army, that had no share in the action, the sailors on board the ships of war and transports, the inhabitants from the rising grounds, and from windows and the tops of houses, were spectators, and beheld with astonishment, true British valour, — saw the rebels, forced from their cover, run in a most cowardly manner, not daring to look behind, leaving Charles-town in flames, when houses would no longer shelter them. I have seen many actions, but the solemn procession preparative to this, in embarking the troops in the boats, the order in which they rowed across the harbour, their alertness in making good their landing, their instantly forming in front of the

enemy, and marching to action, was a grand interesting sight to all concerned. — Let such as inquire after me know that I am in perfect health, and present them with my compliments.

I am, &c., VAL. JONES.

P. S. Ensign Lister is in good spirits; his wound recovers but slowly. — He is not only a good, but a brave young soldier, who is deservedly esteemed."

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